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ABSTRACT

The Student Affirmative Action Program at California State University, Long Beach was designed to serve the needs of Latino students, an underrepresented population in higher education, and to help eliminate identified institutional barriers to their participation. Barriers include inadequate orientation and information, poor planning and academic scheduling, limited support services, and personal and cultural alienation. Program features include: the original summer residential program providing orientation, basic study skills, academic advising, and exposure to some of the interpersonal dynamics of the first year; intensive writing and math instruction; and fall course registration. Participating students are assigned a trained peer advisor for regular meetings, progress evaluation, and referrals for additional academic and nonacademic services. Student scheduling incorporates breaks so students may use academic support services, meet with faculty, or prepare for classes. Group tutorials are also used. Faculty are involved as mentors, advisors, assessors, consultants to peer advisors, instructors, and referral sources. A study of the program's success with three cohorts found their academic performance to be better than that of a control group's, and their retention rates surpassed even those of majority students. (MSE)

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RETENTION OF THE LATINO UNIVERSITY STUDENT: STUDENT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AT CSULB

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After nearly twenty years of heightened awareness of Latino underrepresentation throughout the educational pipeline and major efforts to recruit greater numbers into higher education, little is known about what actually happens to those who enter postsecondary institutions. The Student Affirmative Action Program at Cal State University, Long Beach, designed with the identified needs of that population in mind, involves a comprehensive "package" of components whose effectiveness has been measured against the outcomes experienced by a comparable control group. The academic performance of Latino participants in SAA's first three annual cohorts was significantly better than the control group's, and their retention rates surpassed even those of majority students. This paper includes the SAA model, an analysis of the student needs, a program description, and an evaluation of documented participant outcomes.

For nearly two decades universities have been a significant focal point in discussions of civil rights and equal opportunity because of the critical importance of educational achievement to personal and economic opportunities for advancement. Since the late 1960's considerable attention has been given to identifying the numbers of minority students completing high school, their performance at that level, those admitted to college and their persistence toward undergraduate and graduate degrees, the nature of the institutions which they attend, and intrinsic factors presumably or reportedly affecting their experiences in college. Special access and financial programs have been created in order to encourage, permit, and enhance college opportunities for traditionally underrepresented student groups.

In California and the Southwest generally, the most steadily increasing community is also the most underrepresented on college campuses. For a variety of cultural, social, economic and academic reasons, during a period of approximately fifteen years even categorical programs have failed to bring a desirable proportion of Chicano students into California's postsecondary institutions. For that very reason, in the establishment of the new Student Affirmative Action Program in the state university system in 1970-80, for example, the "Hispanic" population was designated the primary target population on most campuses.

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However, as institutions make sincere efforts to improve Latino student

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participation, they lack data that track the actual performance and persistence patterns of individual students and, in that way, highlight specific needs and tangible outcomes. Programs devised for this population have been based most often on the limited experience or assumptions of their respective administrators. This study is an attempt to provide information based on the individual experiences of Latinos participating in the Student Affirmative Action Program at California State University, Long Beach, a metropolitan Los Angeles campus and one of the largest of 19 California State Universities. It is a typical commuter campus attended by over 32,000 undergraduate and graduate, full and part-time students whose median age is approximately 24-26 years. Demographically, the student body is predominantly Anglo, also characteristic of most universities (especially public institutions) even in ethnically diverse communities of the Southwest.

The data and information given in the pages that follow analyze the identified needs, interventions provided, and outcomes experienced by three consecutive cohorts of program students within the context of nationally recognized information. The extraordinarily high retention rates achieved by participating students, considering the magnitude of Latino underachievement and underrepresentation in higher education, and the documented experiences of that population, suggest that the features of CSULB's SAA program can be put forward as elements of a retention model.

For purposes of this study, retention is defined as the capacity to insure the continuous progress of a student toward a carefully considered and defined personal/career goal via academic endeavors.

Latinos In Higher Education: Access

Much has been written of the educational experiences of Latino students in grades K-12. Researchers have studied not only their comparatively low rate of persistence through elementary and secondary schools, but the numerous factors which presumably affect their continuance or withdrawal from formal schooling. The literature cites: alienation (cultural or personal) from the institution, academic retardation, economic pressures, migrant labor mobility, the role of differing values from those of the mainstream, and peer pressure.

While not the principal focus of this study, it is important to recognize that these factors dramatically reduce the pool of college-eligible high school

graduates. The California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC report (1985) on the graduating class of 1983, found only 15.3% of California's Hispanic high school graduates in the top 33% of their classes and, therefore, regularly admissible to the California State University. It also found that only 4.9% of them were in the top 12.5% and therefore eligible to enter the University of California.

The numerical reduction of Latinos within the educational pipeline is a serious concern even within the context of this study, since it makes the retention of those who do enter these institutions especially crucial. National figures are generally based on ninth grade enrollment as the baseline, excluding any prior attrition. Astin (1982) documents that for white students, 83% of that baseline graduate from high school, 38% enter college, and 23% complete a baccalaureate degree. For the Chicano and Puerto Rican population, however, only 55% complete high school, approximately 23% enter college, and 7% graduate. California figures (CPED, 1985) are marginally lower for white students (78%, 40% and over 20%, respectively). Hispanic rates slightly surpass the national averages: approximately 66% of Hispanics graduate from high school, 25% enter college, and about 10% graduate. Using college entrants as a baseline population, estimates suggest that approximately 30% of Anglos in the Southwest will begin their senior year and, presumably, graduate. However, less that 17% of Mexican American freshmen (already a small number) will persist to their senior year and approach graduation.

A further contributor to diminished numbers of Latino baccalaureates and graduate degrees is the fact that the overwhelming majority of Latinos who do pursue higher education enter community colleges. In California nearly 85% of Hispanic first-time freshmen are in community colleges, fewer than 2% annually receive the AA degree and only 3% transfer to baccalaureate granting institutions (2.5% to CSU and .5 to UC).

Finally, recent studies document enrollment gains in higher education, especially in the 1980's. However, these increases must be viewed in light of three underlying phenomena. First, they remain far behind Latino population growth rates. Second, increasing numbers of other Hispanics often mask declines in Chicano enrollment, a historically underrepresented target group. And third, aggregate data often overlook attrition by substituting new enrollees for those leaving the institution, so that graduation rates remain low despite growing enrollments.

Academic Performance and Persistence

A research conducted on large cross-sections of college students nationwide identified the following factors as significant enhancements of academic success: good high school preparation, good study habits, high self-esteem, relatively well-educated and somewhat affluent family background, entry from high school directly to a four-year institution, residence on campus, receipt of financial aid grants or scholarships and no need to work, and enrollment at a selective institution (from CSU, Ethnic Data and Higher Education, pp. 5-3, 5-4). Our experience has been that Hispanic-origin students, with limited exceptions, are almost item-for-item the exact opposite. Asked to identify the two main reasons why they or their peers must withdraw from the university, students most highly rated in order the following factors: need to support self or family financially,, lack of interest/motivation/goals, time conflicts with job or family obligation, emotional inability to cope with college demands, academic underpreparedness, and poor academic performance. When asked what the campus might do to assist them, students most commonly cited increased financial aid resources, greater variation in course offerings, simplification of financial aid processing, more convenient course scheduling, more effective instructors, and improved financial aid information (Ethnic Data, Tables 6.4-6.9, 6,12).

While much has been written about these factors, our research has highlighted another key element: irrespective of family educational background (or support), performance in college is directly correlated with students' assumptions about college attendance during elementary and junior high school. Logically, early decisions produce a predisposition toward the activities that should result in better preparation. The effect of early expectations and secondary school retention rates is a consideration beyond the scope of this study. But for those who attend college, the initiative resulting from student expectations alone seems sufficient to mitigate many institutional and external factors that impede the progress of other students. Information reported by randomly selected SAA Latinos illustrates the impact of this factor and has strong implications for those who influence them most at earlier levels of education.

Unfortunately, most Latinos make late decisions as a result of peer influences, newly-discovered goals, or the influences of college recruiters offering special programs. Their underpreparation, indicated by low scores on standardized college admission tests, is verified by local placement or

proficiency examinations. Regardless of whether such measures can be considered valid indicators of potential, they do correlate with performance patterns. Latino undergraduates at CSULB, for example, have earned a 3-year average GPA of 2.48, .32 grade points lower than the Anglo average of 2.80 for the same period. Those whose grades are at the lower end of the continuum, i.e., those who bring the group average down, must be considered "at risk" academically and potential candidates for discouragement, withdrawal, or academic failure.

In addition to preparation (psychological and/or academic), a number of institutional barriers emerged in our examination of Latino student experiences. These are particularly critical for minimally prepared, marginalized, first-generation minority college students. They include:

1. Inadequate orientation and information

Traditional orientation programs--assuming basic knowledge of the college experience--are insufficient for most Latinos, who cannot absorb complex technical details related in meaningless jargon. Most of them expect college to be a more sophisticated and demanding version of high school, but they cannot translate that vague notion into practical terms. Many disoriented Latinos are truly lost within the university mainstream when they are expected to comprehend the content of orientation presentations and to pursue needed assistance or resources.

2. Poor planning and academic scheduling

Unable to rely on basic knowledge presumed by the university, minority students confront problems in their choice of courses or the ways in which they package their programs. A close examination of individual SAA student records has revealed the following troublesome patterns:

a. Course selection typically replicates the familiar high school curriculum of heavy reading courses. Math and science prerequisites and co-requisites are overlooked; and critical writing courses are postponed indefinitely by the apprehensive writers who need them the most. Generally, infrequent performance evaluation prevents even those who can identify their needs or know where to seek help from securing timely remedial or support resources.

b. Course scheduling is tightened as much as possible to accommodate other obligations, adversely affecting fresh concentration in each class

meeting and impeding utilization of campus resources, peer interaction, full participation in the university.

3. Limited support services

The recognized insufficiency of campus support resources for all students is especially critical for Latinos not usually socialized to pursue needed assistance aggressively, if at all. Separate, categorically funded services are often staffed by student assistants not fully qualified to provide the comprehensive assessment, advisement, and referral really needed.

4. Personal and cultural alienation

General alienation from the institutional mainstream is a phenomenon intrinsic to a large commuter institution. For Latinos, alienation is magnified by the cultural antithesis of bureaucracy and technological depersonalization, the absence of role models among university staff and students, the majority's lesser expectations of them, and the overt or subtle resistance to or resentment of affirmative action programs. Students surveyed, almost universally, reported: 1) no involvement in student organizations or attendance at campus functions, 2) a lack of close personal ties with peers, 3) very little contact with faculty outside of class time, and 4) minimal departmental affiliation or identification.

Besides the institutional issues, there are also a number of personal factors adversely affecting Latino persistence and performance, particularly a general lack of focus (career, major, procedural) and uncertainties about the accessiblity of those goals once defined, for academic as well as financial reasons. Cycles of disorientation, apathy, poor performance, doubt and disorientation ultimately undercut motivation for any student. The more prevalent problem for Latinos, however, is clearly the lack of firmly-established, compatible personal and career goals to be pursued through the university experience. Those whose conscious goal is "to go to college" meet it when they begin their first semester and lack subsequent direction to motivate their efforts. Many undertake majors chosen for them by others (parents, counselors, peers) because of presumed marketability or just the desire to please, even if these fields are contrary to personal strengths or values. Others lack outright either any area of professional interest or a notion of what they might do after completing a preferred major.

Probably the most often-cited causes of student difficulty are the least controllable factors and frequently also the most powerful ones. By far the

greatest (individual or family) element is fiscal need, including unavailable or inadequate financial aid, which causes the students to work far more than their studyloads allow. Fewer than half the SAA Latino students surveyed had been granted financial aid, and all of these had to work at least half-time while carrying full-time enrollment to qualify for their awards. Eighty percent of all those surveyed worked to support themselves, averaging just over 25 hours weekly, and about one-third of them had to contribute to their family's primary support during their college enrollment.

Finally, students are affected by cultural values which prioritize family identification and needs over individualism and interpersonal obligations over personal advantage, so often misconstrued as indicative of a devaluation of education. As the first generation to attend college, SAA students perceived their families as being morally supportive, but lacking an understanding of study obligations or the resources (fiscal and physical) students need and unable to spare them involvement in serious family emergencies that interfere with their attention to university obligations.

Student Affirmative Action At CSULB: A Retention Model

Established in the Fall '82, the Retention Component of Student Affirmative Action was created to provide a continuation of services to students who had received application assistance from the program's Outreach Component or who entered the university as new Latino and Black students (these being the most underrepresented groups in the university). Unlike participants in the established Educational Opportunity Program, SAA students are primarily regularly admitted, though a limited number of special-action admits have been serviced. SAA's goal is to work with new students through approximately their first year, at the end of which most are prepared to utilize mainstream university services independently. Program resources can accommodate only 100-200 new Black and Latino students annually in the mentor program, the component designed to assist new enrollees.

A. Program features

Since its initiation, SAA has offered a Summer Residential Program to provide orientation, basic study skills, academic advising, and exposure to some of the interpersonal dynamics students were likely to encounter in the coming year. Expansion of the program in 1985 has permitted the addition of intensive writing and math instruction and fall course registration.

Participating students are immediately assigned a principal peer advisor with whom they meet at fixed intervals to average approximately one meeting per month during their first year. Those deemed to have special needs are given frequent appointments until their satisfactory progress is verified. Though impossible during the early years of the program examined in this report, initial advisor contact with students (especially with those unable to attend the summer program) now precedes the opening of their critical first semester.

Sessions with advisors include academic progress evaluation (through concrete evidence),and referrals to tutorial, learning assistance, counseling, testing, learning disability, career guidance, financial aid, or other advising staff within the program or in other campus offices. Mid-term grade evaluations are requested of the faculty, and assistance for course selection and scheduling is provided. There is verification that basic university requirements are completed, and there are discussions about the advisement received from major departments and about career exploration. At each visit the student is given a copy of the file report of that session, including recommendations to be followed before the next meeting, and her/his next appointment.

Among a variety of goals and guidelines, the duties of advisors include helping students proactively to avoid many of the characteristic pitfalls enumerated earlier as contributors to attrition. Advisor-approved course selection represents not only different instructional/study modes but also a mixture of skills development activities (writing, reading, math).They also take general education, major, or elective solids, where the skills can be specifically applied. The effectiveness of that approach was verified by comparing the first year performance of specially admitted SAA students with a control group taken from a similar program. The latter received a GPA of 2.13 in a skills development and orientation curriculum in the fall but plunged to 1.67 in a spring program of general education solids. The SAA students seemed overwhelmed by an exclusively solid first semester (1.94) but responded very well (2.41) in a subsequent semester of continued study skill workshops, writing and reading development, and general education. (R. Evans, "Final SAA Mentor Program Report," September 1985).

SAA scheduling has also required breaks after two consecutive classes to ensure time for the use of academic support resources, faculty office hours, and either reflection on new material or preparation for the next class. Group tutorials have been used to develop study skills within the specific

context of course content, a concept now institutionalized under the rubric of Supplemental Instruction. Furthermore, advisors have given special attention to the discussion of career goals and choices of major because of the special impact that these factors have on motivation.

Though "only" students themselves (upper division and graduate), advisors are given cross-cultural training and a very thorough orientation to university programs, policies and procedures, and as much information as possible about frequent causes of difficulty. It is intended to anticipate student needs and to be able to intervene immediately and appropriately as problems arise. Serious or complex matters are referred to the program coordinator (full-time professional staff or faculty), who often makes an initial evaluation of each student and initiates more formal assessment as indicated. Since students have signed contracts to keep appointments and to follow advisors' recommendations, missed appointments generate an immediate letter routed through an instructor or sent home. Reported academic problems (e.g., by professors or tutors) result in immediate contact to provide firm recommendations or instructions for dealing with those areas.

The program's very intrusive, directive approach may be disputed by those who believe that students should be allowed to learn from their careless mistakes or ill-considered choices. Those premises are not denied by the program, whose findings indicate instead that most student difficulties result from general ignorance of the tremendous adjustment needed from the inner city high school to the university's real demands and expectations. Thus the proactive efforts, and the intrusive philosophy with which they are made, seek to establish sound foundations and academic patterns that will benefit students beyond their term of full program involvement. It will allow students to make knowledgeable judgments about priorities in future semesters. Limited staff resources discourage student continuance in these services for more than their first year; but even if additional resources permitted, the program philosophy discourages long-term participation, seeking instead to bridge students into an appropriate level of independence and utilization of all that the university has to offer.

The other aspect in which the program is unique is in the establishment and maintenance of faculty involvement. Believing faculty to be the key "players" in student retention efforts, the program has consistently utilized faculty as mentors, academic advisors, assessors, consultants peer advisors , instructors, and referral sources. The cooperation of the university's most respected faculty has been solicited not only to monitor individual progress but also to accommodate other services. Supplemental instruction, tutorials,

skills development workshops, and orientation programs are some of the means by which the program enables students to meet the high academic standards of their instructors. Outcomes of such efforts have been so positive that faculty members have requested to work with the program.

B. Student participation and outcomes

In the three (yearly) cohorts examined in this study, participants averaged 1.84 semesters in the program, ranging from a minimum of less than one semester to a maximum of four semesters. They saw their advisors approximately once each month (an academic year average of 8.2 meetings). Sessions included an average of 3.2 academic progress reviews per semester, and every student received registration advising for the following term. In addition, from either the advisor or the program coordinator, students received the following services:

34% were advised about (one or more) required university exams;
28% were provided personal counseling related to family crises home conflicts, personal problems, housing difficulties, or health matters affecting their academic performance;
24% required career counseling or assistance in choosing or changing their majors;
21% sought help with administrative procedures;
19% sought assistance with financial problems; and
13% received assessment of academic skills or evaluation for possible learning disabilities.

In the area of instructional support, skills development tutoring (math, writing, or study skills) was provided to one of every two students . Some received assistance in more than one area while others did not require help. For example, course-related tutoring was requested or advisor-recommended in one course for an average of 76% of the students. The greatest demand for tutoring occurred in the social sciences, math, and science.

In addition to the direct services which program staff provided, students were referred to offices or individuals who could offer more specialized services. Diagnostic evaluations by SAA advisors or program administrators resulted in individual student referrals as follows:

71% tutorial programs
18% professors or departmental advisors
15% test preparation workshops

13% the Career Development Center
11% study skills workshops (Learning Assistance Center)
07% the Adult Learning Disabilities Program
06% the Financial Aid Office
05% the Counseling Center

Problems experienced in offices expected to be academically supportive were handled directly by the SAA administrators and the respective program supervisors. Therefore, these are not reflected in the referrals enumerated above.

In 1984-85 SAA devised a control group to better assess program effectiveness in the critical first year. An ethnically comparable population of new students not serviced by an affirmative action program was selected to compare their performance measures with that of the participants. Latino SAA students (regular and a limited number of special admits) earned a cumulative GPA of 2.45 in their first year, compared with the control group's 2.25 (all regular admits). Both groups had completed the same total number of units (21.4). While actively participating in the SAA retention program, all Latino students earned an average GPA of 2.51 and completed an annual average of 22 units.

Although a recent persistence rate for Latinos at CSULB is not available, systemwide data for the California State University and the University of California might be considered general indicators for purposes of evaluation. In the Fall 1985, UC Berkley's Office of Student Research reported a record-high second year return of 82% of Chicanos and 83% of Latinos from the freshman classes of 1980-81 and 1981-82 (An Overview of Freshman Persistence and Graduation at UC Berkeley, October ,1985). The same document cited a five-year persistence rate (continued enrollment or graduation) of 51% of Chicanos and 53% of Latinos, compared with 34% and 38% in the CSU for the same groups.

During Fall '85, the number of SAA participants who had entered CSULB in 1982-83 or after (principally freshmen from target high schools but also including transfer students) reflected that: 73% of the original 48 Latinos had been retained to begin their fourth year in fall 1985 or had graduated; 60% of the 20 who entered the program in 1983-84 (a major program modification) had begun their third year; and 88% of the 50 who entered in 1984-85 enrolled in fall 1985 for a second year. The SAA students were primarily regularly admitted (89% in 1982, 70% in 1983, and 79% in 1984), though most originated from the same types of predominantly

minority inner city schools (high schools or community colleges) as those who required special admission consideration from the Educational Opportunity Program. See Table 2 below.

Table 2
Persistence rates: SAA Latinos

		enrolled Fall 1985 or graduated
entered	1982 - 83 (48)	73%
	1983 - 84 (20)	60%
	1984 - 85 (50)	88%

Using Berkeley's retention figures as a basis for general comparison (expected academic preparation presumably correlated with performance demanded by each system), SAA persistence rates are comparable and, thus, extraordinarily high for any CSU population strand.

Table 3
Comparative persistence rates
Latinos at UCB vs. SAA at CSULB

	Berkeley	SAA, CSULB
began second year	82%	85%
began third year	73%	71%*

* Aggregate data, for Latinos entering program in 1982-83 and 1983-84.

Special admit SAA students show improved retention by comparison with the sample special-admit population used as a control group for the purpose of evaluation. Those serviced by SAA have persisted as follows: 67% completed two years and began a third year (control group, 39%), and 71% completed one year and began a second one (control group, 61%). Of this special admit SAA population, 70% participated in the program for at least one academic year and left the SAA mentor program in good standing, while the remaining 30% either left the mentor program prematurely or were transferred into the SAA probation intervention program developed in recent years.

It is not known what percentage of all CSULB Latino students have ever been on probation nor for how long. An examination of the complete academic record of SAA participants indicates that 34% of those in the

1982-83 program were on probation for an average 2.2 semesters, beginning most commonly during a semester in which they had minimal or late contact with advisors. The records indicate that 32% of those in later cohorts of the program averaged 1.58 semesters on probation, a shorter period which is probably the result of the more frequent and more direct interventions begun within the program in 1983.

All those who entered the mentor program in good standing (having completed a semester or more prior to program entry) left it in good standing and raised their GPA's from 2.15 to 2.52. All those who entered already on probation left in good standing, having raised their GPA's from 1.73 to 2.58. Those who began the program as new university students left it or completed the Spring '85 semester as follows : 84.4% in good standing and 15.6% on probation (of these, 8.9% were regular admits and 6.7% special admits).

Table 4
Academic Status (3 SAA cohorts)

entered program	program beg. GPA	program end GPA	Sept. 1985 good standing	Sept. 1985 probation
continuing students				
good standing	2.15	2.52	100 %	----
probation	1.73	2.58	100 %	----
new students	0.00	2.30	84.4%	15.6%

An overwhelming majority (87.5%) of the SAA students who had been in probation first experienced unsatisfactory progress in their first university semester. Nearly all students in the sample had been essentially on their own in that critical first semester,since the initial pre-semester contact began in 1985-86.

While attention is appropriately directed to the difficulties and needs represented by poor performance, it must also be noted that the cumulative GPA of 20.3% of the SAA Latinos in the three cohorts here discussed is above 3.00, so that one-fifth of them meet eligibility criteria for the university honors program (compared with 11.4% of Chicano and 15.1% of other Latino undergraduates).

Conclusions

As resources continue to be invested in generating applications from groups underrepresented in higher education, the retention of those historically excluded students becomes a moral, fiscal, social, political ,and academic imperative. This study represents an effort to identify the needs and experiences of Latino students who enter one particular campus. Specifically, it attempts to document the effectiveness of a strategy which appears to have had a significant impact on the target students performance and persistence. There remains a tremendous need for more information, especially that derived from this type of individual tracking, rather than from aggregate data. There is a lack of research that assesses the relative value of the individual components which comprise programs like this one. The fact that most parallel programs have not documented similar retention rates or other outcomes suggests that its unique features are particularly significant, although the specific impact of those elements has yet to be evaluated.

In the discussion of retention statistics and possible efforts to enhance them, it is appropriate to acknowledge that only large prestigious universities or small private colleges tend to have high retention rates. In some respects, it may be intrinsic to large public institutions, whose students enroll for very diverse reasons, to have high attrition rates. However, for students whose stated intention is a degree, and who enter the university with expectations about the manner in which and the calendar within which those goals can be met, a responsive institutional perspective is called for. Based on the findings which this study presents, the following general recommendations can be enumerated with specific reference to Latinos, though their implementation would clearly benefit any student.

1. Provide new students (or those experiencing difficulty) a basic and comprehensive academic support program as their first point of contact.

2. Provide professional staff to assess and meet the needs of the students effectively.

3. Implement a comprehensive program which includes a number of critical components. These essential services can be provided directly or can be obtained through referrals to indicated campus professionals in mainstream programs.

4. Facilitate personal accountability and involvement. Accountability and involvement must exist between: student and advisor; instructor, student, and advisor; and professional staff, student, and advisor.

5. Plan an appropriate time for each intervention. Timing will determine, to a large extent, its effectiveness.

6. Consider the cultural background of the students and its impact on the institutional experience.

Retention requires a university wide effort . It demands the participation of all university segments, not merely of those formally charged with the provision of student services or academic support resources. What has been proposed above would benefit all the students, certainly, but it is critical to any effort to improve the true access of Latino students to higher education after they have been accepted into the university. It is presented as a total package, because while anything less than a holistic approach to services would have at least temporary benefit, the long-term value of retention efforts is dependent upon the combination of a comprehensive approach with ongoing monitoring of student progress and experiences. The model emphasizes that an ideal environment to enhance the retention benefits which academic support services provide would include increased faculty; administrative, faculty and professional role models; and an appreciation on the part of university employees for the cultural values of Latino students.

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